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Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics.

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HOW TO BUILD AND USE A FIRELESS COOKER.

PRINCIPLE. The principle of the fireless cooker is to retain the heat obtained by first boiling the food for a few minutes. It is then placed in the cooker which does not allow the heat to escape. The food must be heated in the same vessel in the cooker. This vessel must have tight cover and be moved from fire to cooker as quickly as possible. Otherwise, heat will be lost. Hot soapstones are sometimes placed in the cooker with the food when higher temperature is needed or longer cooking desired. These may be purchased from a hardware dealer at 50¢ each.

ADVANTAGES. 1. Time saving; while food is cooking, the housekeeper may be occupied with other duties without fear of its burning.

2. Better foods; many foods thus cooked for a longer time at a low temperature have finer flavor and are more wholesome than if cooked on a stove at higher temperature.

3. Comfort; saves working in hot kitchen, keeping up fires, watching food.

4. Fuel saving; fire kept up just long enough to make food boiling hot before putting in cooker. In summer, the use of a fireless cooker with a kerosene stove will result in both comfort and economy.

BUILDING THE COOKER. Select a tightly built wooden box, an old trunk, barrel, large lard tub, or tin lard can for the outside container. This must be large enough to allow at least four inches of packing all around the nest. A box long enough to contain two compartments may be secured. If this is done there should be at least 6 inches of packing between the two nests, and two cushions to cover each nest separately so that one vessel may be removed without disturbing the other.

THE NEST. The nest, to contain the vessel of hot food, must be considered next. If no hot stone is to be used, this nest may be made of strong paste board cylindrical in shape and as snug as possible to allow cooking vessel to be moved in and out. If too large, the air space will cool the food. The cardboard forming this cylindrical nest should be lapped and fastened tightly. If a hot stone is to be used, a metal nest must be used. A tin bucket will do or better still have a tinner make a galvanized iron one deep enough to contain a soapstone and the cooker vessel. This metal vessel must be wrapped with asbestos to prevent the hot stone from scorching or burning the packing.

PACKING. For packing between the nest and outer container some material which heat will not pass through quickly must be used. First, line the box or other container with layers of paper to keep out cold air. Lint cotton, wool, shredded newspaper, Spanish moss and excelsior are good for packing. The packing should first be placed in the outside container to a depth of four inches, then place the cardboard or asbestos for the bottom of the nest. Next place the cardboard cylinder or the asbestos covered can and hold steady while pressing the packing tightly around it,

leaving no air spaces. When this has reached the top of the nest, cut a piece of cardboard to fit the space, cutting out a circle to open the nest. This cardboard cover should be fastened securely to the nest by pasted strips of cloth or heavy paper. It is well to make a paper cover to keep the cardboard clean and hide the pasted strips on top. The space between the top of nest and the lid of the outside container must be filled with a cushion or pad. Make this the exact size of the space and stuff with the packing material. It should be at least four inches thick and should fit against the top tightly enough to cause pressure when the lid is closed. If a box is used, the lid should be on hinges with hook to fasten it down. The lid of barrel or lard tub may be fastened by means of screw hooks and eyes at intervals around the top. If a wooden container is used, it will be more sightly if stained or painted a dull, dark brown or green. The cooker will be complete when castors have been put on the bottom to make it easily moved.

FOOD VESSEL. For this any utensil which has a tight cover and which will fit the nest may be used. There should be no air space left to cause loss of heat. A vessel having straight sides and having the same depth as diameter is best. A special enamel or aluminum fireless cooker vessel can be purchased for 50¢ to \$1.50 depending upon size and material. Aluminum is the best because it will retain heat for a longer time.

USING THE HOME-MADE COOKER.

Efficient cooking will depend upon retention of heat. A small quantity of food will not hold as much heat as a larger one and will therefore continue cooking for a shorter time. The more nearly full the vessel is of food, the better will the heat be retained. In heating the soapstone, be careful not to let them become red hot because of danger of cracking.

NOTE: All measurements used in these recipes are level. The cup used holds one-half pint. The abbreviations are: tsp. - teaspoonful, tbsp. - tablespoonful, c. - cup.

CREOLE CHICKEN.

1 medium sized chicken	1 Bay leaf
6 Tomatoes or 1 #2 can tomatoes	1 tbsp. chopped parsley
3 Sweet red peppers cut in small cubes)	2 tsp. salt
3 Sweet green " " " " ")	1 onion (size of egg)
(or 1 #2 can of peppers)	2 tbsp. butter or bacon drippings
½ pound ham or 2 or 3 slices bacon chopped finely.	

Cut chicken as for stew: sear by dropping it into 1 pint boiling water; then let simmer gently for ½ hour.

Cook the chopped onion in the butter or meat drippings until light yellow. Simmer tomatoes for 15 minutes with the bay leaf, strain, and pour over the onions. Now add the minced ham and parsley and cook for 15 minutes longer. To this mixture add the chopped peppers and the chicken stock and bring to a boil. Place the chicken in the fireless cooker vessel, pour over it this mixture of vegetables and let boil 5 minutes. Put at once into the fireless cooker. With the hot soapstone, let the chicken stay in the cooker for 2 hours; without hot stone, for 3 hours.

A ham bone may be substituted for the ham or bacon. If this is done, boil it for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour in enough water to cover. Then add one cup of the ham broth to the tomato before cooking it with the bay leaf. This recipe gives a good way to use chicken too old to fry or broil. A similar dish can be made by using a quart of Canning Club soup mixture. When necessary, thicken the broth with a little browned flour before putting the chicken in the cooker.

CEREALS.

HOMINY GRITS. 5 c. water, 2 tsp. salt, 1 c. hominy grits. Pick over and wash hominy grits. Have the salted water boiling and add the hominy slowly so as not to stop the boiling. Continue to boil rapidly for ten minutes over the fire, then place the vessel into the cooker as quickly as possible and allow to remain (over night) for about 12 hours. The vessel of hominy may be placed in another vessel of boiling water before being placed in the cooker.

SAMP (COARSE HOMINY). $\frac{1}{2}$ c. samp soaked in 1 c. cold water 6 hours. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt and 3 c. boiling water. Boil rapidly 45 minutes. Put in cooker 8 to 12 hours.

OAT MEAL. 3 c. water, 1 tsp. salt, 1 c. oatmeal. Carefully look over the oat meal and remove any husks or foreign substance. Add gradually to the boiling salted water and boil rapidly for 10 minutes stirring constantly. Now it may be put into the cooker. After 2 or 3 hours it is soft but a better flavor will be developed by longer cooking. It may remain in the cooker over night in the same manner the hominy grits are cooked (about 12 hours). Next morning it may have to be reheated: to do this, set the cooker pan in a pan of water over the fire. When the water boils up well, the oat meal may be served.

PLAIN RICE. 1 c. rice, 3 c. water, $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt. Look over and wash the rice through several waters, until cloudiness is removed. Bring the salted water to a boil. 1 tsp. lard may be added. Then add rice gradually into the boiling water in the cooker vessel so as not to stop the boiling. The grains should be kept moving in the boiling water and allow to boil 5 minutes before putting it into the cooker for 45 minutes or an hour.

There is a considerable difference in rice. Old rice absorbs more water than new rice and the time for cooking it will vary. An hour will be sufficient usually for this small amount. Rice is injured by overcooking. When rice is tender, drain in colander and place in warm oven for about 5 minutes. Serve at once. Sometimes it is well after draining rice in colander to pour cold water over it. This will wash away the starchy substance between the grains, and keep them from adhering or sticking together. Then place the colander in a hot oven to heat and dry out the rice. If desired the lard may be omitted. It lends a brilliancy to the rice grains when cooked.

RICE IN PILAF. (An Oriental Mixture.) 2 c. stock, 1 c. rice, 2 tbsp. butter, 1 tsp. sugar, 2 slices onion, 6 ripe tomatoes or 1 c. canned tomato juice, 1 tsp. salt, $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. pepper, 1 tbsp. chopped green sweet pepper may be added.

Look over and wash the rice. Chop the onion very finely and fry in 1 tbsp. of the butter until yellow. Add to it the boiling juice of the tomatoes, and the

boiling broth and allow all to boil before adding the rice gradually so as not to stop the boiling. Boil mixture about 5 minutes and place in cooker 1 hour. When ready to serve, add 1 tbsp. butter. Stir with a fork to mix evenly. " Pilar is injured by overcooking.

SOUPS.

VEGETABLE SOUP. (Made without stock) $\frac{1}{2}$ c. carrots, $\frac{1}{2}$ c. turnips, 1 c. potatoes, $\frac{1}{2}$ c. onions, $\frac{1}{2}$ c. cabbage, 3 c. tomato juice or 1 #3 can tomatoes, 1 tbsp. flour, 2 tsp. salt, 1 tbsp. celery seed (crushed), 1 qt. water, 4 tbsp. butter, $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp. parsley, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. pepper.

Cut all vegetables (except potatoes and onions and parsley) into small pieces. Cook them for 10 minutes in 3 tbsp. butter. Add potatoes and cook 3 minutes longer. Mix all ingredients (except parsley) in the cooker utensil and boil 5 minutes. Mix 1 tbsp. butter and 1 tbsp. flour; add enough of the liquor to make it smooth and pour it into the mixture. Cook 5 minutes more and place into the cooker for 4 to 6 hours.

CREOLE SOUP. (Made with stock) Stock: 2 lb. shin beef (meat and bone), $1\frac{1}{2}$ qt. water. Cut the meat from the bone into small pieces. Crack the bone and soak 1 hour in cold water. Bring to a boil slowly and when boiling place in cooker for 5 to 7 hours. When cooked, strain and set away to cool. The cake of fat which forms on top when stock is cold seals the stock and keeps out air and germs and should not be removed until soup is to be made. Then fat is removed and stock heated and any seasonings or additions desired are put in.

To 1 qt. of this stock or 1 qt. water in which chicken has been cooked, add 1 qt. of canned soup mixture and 2 tbsp. rice or barley, bring to a boil and cook in cooker 2 to 3 hours. This will make a delightful soup.

MEAT AND VEGETABLE COMBINATIONS. With the less tender cuts of beef and mutton which require long, slow cooking, delicious dishes may be prepared by adding vegetables and cooking in the fireless.

Cut the meat in cubes, dredge with flour and brown it in meat drippings or lard and butter. Then brown the onions in the same fat. For every 3 or 4 cups of meat, use one of the following vegetable combinations or 1 qt. of Canning Club soup mixture. Put into the fireless cooker vessel and add 1 cup boiling water with the first combination or two cups water with the second one. Boil for 5 minutes and put in cooker for 3 or 4 hours.

First:	2 c. okra	Second:	2 c. potatoes
	2 c. tomatoes		1 c. turnips
	2 onions		1 c. carrots
	$1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt		2 onions
	$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. pepper		$\frac{1}{2}$ c. celery or 1 tbsp. celery seed crushed

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